

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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In the most common definition, motivation is referred as a psychological trait which leads people to achieve a goal. For language learners, mastery of a language may be a goal. For others, communicative competence or even basic communication skills could be a goal. Standard Oxford definition states that "Motivation is the reason of the reasons behind one's actions and behaviour". While Gardner defined it as "Referring to the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity".

The motivation results from several psychological needs of individual. Generally people are motivated to do things in order to satisfy their esteem, get rid of the instability, insecurity and to achieve rewards of some sort. The motivation can be further classified into integrative and instrumental.

Motivation has been identified as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language (Crookes and Schmidt 1991). It is thought that students who are most successful when learning a target language are those who like the people that speak the language, admire the culture and have a desire to become familiar with or even integrate into the society in which the language is used (Falk 1978). This form of motivation is known as integrative motivation. When someone becomes a resident in a new community that uses the target language in its social interactions, integrative motivation is a key component in assisting the learner to develop some level of proficiency in the language. It becomes the necessity, in order to operate socially in the community and become one of its members.

In contrast to integrative motivation is the form of motivation referred to as instrumental motivation. This is generally characterised by the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language (Hudson 2000). With instrumental motivation the purpose of language acquisition is more utilitarian, such as meeting the requirements for school or university graduation, applying for a job, requesting higher pay based on language ability, reading technical material, translation work or achieving higher school status. Instrumental motivation is often characteristic of second language acquisition, where little or no social integration of the learner into a community using the target language takes place, or in some instances is even desired. It is important to note that instrumental motivation has only been acknowledged as a significant factor in some research, whereas integrative motivation is continually linked to successful second language acquisition. It has been found that generally students select instrumental reasons more frequently than integrative reasons for the study of language. Those who do support an integrative approach to language study are usually more highly motivated and overall more successful in language learning. Brown (2000) makes the point that both integrative and instrumental motivation are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations.

Motivation is an important factor in L2 achievement. For this reason it is important to identify both the type and combination of motivation that assists in the successful acquisition of a second language. At the same time it is necessary to view motivation as one of a number of variables in an intricate model of interrelated individual and situational factors which are unique to each language learner.

Sometimes a distinction is made between positive and negative motivation. Positive motivation is a response which includes enjoyment and optimism about the tasks that you are involved in. Negative motivation involves undertaking tasks for fear that there should be undesirable outcomes, eg. failing a subject, if tasks are not completed. The following are the keywords that "Motivation" triggers in our minds:

*Goal

*Energy

*Effort

*Active involvement

*Desire

*Persistence

Educational psychologists point out three major sources of motivation in learning:

1. The learner's natural interest: intrinsic satisfaction.
2. The teacher (institution) employment: extrinsic reward.
3. Success in the task: combining satisfaction and reward.

In order to make the language learning process a more motivating experience instructors need to put a great deal of thought into developing programs which maintain students' interest and have obtained short term goals. At university level this may include any number of foreign exchange programs with other universities, overseas "homestay" programs, or any other activities which may help to motivate students to improve their target language proficiency.